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Foreword

This special volume gathers some selected papers presented at the 5th Rhine Workshop on Computer Algebra (RWCA) held during 1–3 April, 1996 at the French–German Institute of Saint-Louis (ISL). The previous workshops were held in Strasbourg (1988 and 1990), Saint-Louis (1992) and Karlsruhe (1994) where the name RWCA was adopted. RWCA-6 will be held in Bonn in the Spring of 1998. The earlier meetings were mainly French only and known as “Journées d’études de Calcul Formel”. They were mostly dedicated to differential equations and applications. These remain the main topics of RWCA although the scope has been extended.

Despite its name, RWCA aims at being an European meeting where young researchers and newcomers to the field are given a chance to present their work. Another motivation is not to compete with well established conferences in the domain (ISSAC, AAECC and IMACS-ACA a new conference on Applications of Computer Algebra started by IMACS in 1995). To achieve these goals RWCA is kept as informal as possible. For instance, the proceedings are only a collection of the presented papers, distributed to the attendees only.

Papers accepted for presentation at the workshop are selected by the program committee. The selection of the papers appearing in this special volume has proceeded as follows. Some authors of presented papers have been offered to submit an improved version of their paper for formal refereeing. Each submission has been sent to at least two referees. Some papers have been read by up to five reviewers when this has been thought necessary. The referees have been selected worldwide despite the name of the workshop. The result is that 17 papers only have been accepted for publication and that it has been possible to lift any requirement on the length of the contributions. Two papers only can be labelled as true application papers. The number of papers on differential equations is relatively high, but this topic is a trademark of this workshop. We are very grateful to Maurice Nivat for commissioning this special volume.

Jacques Calmet
Alain Carrière,
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